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TREASURER FONG PROMOTES *SAVE-AT-SCHOOL* PROGRAM

(SARATOGA) -- State Treasurer Matt Fong and Saratoga school officials Thursday launched the treasurer's "Save-at-School" program, which is designed to teach elementary school students money management skills while they save.

Treasurer Fong was joined at Foothill Elementary School in Saratoga by roughly 250 students, parents and faculty of the Saratoga Union Elementary School District. Saratoga Mayor Jillian Moran and officials from Saratoga National Bank also attended the school rally. Fong's Save-at-School program allows students from participating schools to open savings accounts with banks like Saratoga National Bank and participate in a curriculum designed to teach sound financial skills.

"Above all else, education means preparing students for the challenges they will face in life. Personal savings levels have dropped to their lowest point since the Depression and credit card debt is at an all-time high. This is a serious problem, and we have to teach the next generation how to overcome it," Fong said. "The Save-at-School program is a practical, hands-on method of teaching savings."

The program is centered around a 12-lesson teaching manual designed for use as a guide for participating educators. After the course, students will be able to determine an income, make consumer choices, plan a budget and pay bills. The curriculum activities are divided into six categories: math; social studies and history; science; computers; creative arts, including art and drama; and language arts, which includes writing and reading. The program is designed to provide flexibility to teachers by allowing them to select information from the manual as it seems appropriate for their classes.

Fong's goals for the Save-at-School program include promoting proper financial habits and the concept of savings, expanding students' access to savings accounts, developing problem-solving skills and combining the resources of the Treasurer's office, educators, business and the financial community in making new programs available to students. For more information about Save-at-School, visit the program's web page at treasurer.ca.gov/sas.htm.

